

# Mathews honored as DXFD educator

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**Firefighter Harry Mathews.**

Harry Mathews is one of five Massachusetts firefighters who received a citation last week recognizing his work educating school children about fire and life safety.

The commendations were presented at a ceremony in Southbridge on Sept. 27. The two-day meeting, which began Sept. 26, marked the 23rd Annual Fire & Life Safety Education Conference.

“This citation is presented to Firefighter Harry Mathews with heartfelt thanks for your tireless efforts and unselfish devotion to the cause of fire and life safety education. You have earned the everlasting gratitude of the citizenry of Massachusetts. Presented this 27th day of September, 2017.”

State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey signed the citation.

Mathews said Chief Nord nominated him for the award.

“We are fortunate to have Harry,” Duxbury Fire Chief Kevin

Nord said. “He has been

very instrumental in the development of our public fire safety program. Each year Harry and many others go into the schools and teach fire safety. Things like stop, drop, and roll, know your way out, how to make emergency phone calls to 911, etc. Harry was nominated from a field of hundreds across the State for Fire and Life Safety of the year award.”

Mathews and finalist nominees from Chelsea, Cohasset, Lincoln, Wilmington and Townsend each received citations for their respective work as fire and life safety educators. The award as 2017 Fire & Life Safety Educator of the Year went to a Chelsea fire department member.

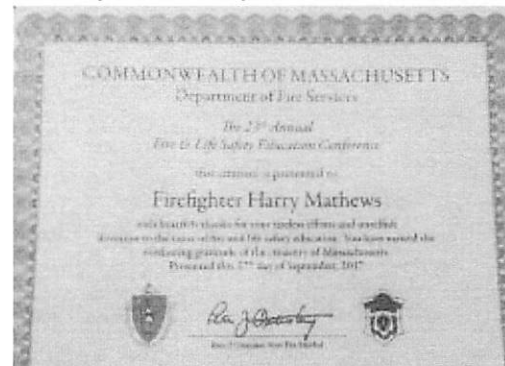
Still, the honor of his nomination and the commendation he received from his compatriots is honor enough, Mathews explained.

“It feels great. It’s a kind of honor. I do the best I can all the time,” Mathews said. “I like to educate people, going into schools.”

Mathews’ service in Duxbury spans 12 years. Before becoming a firefighter he worked in Boston as a paramedic for 22 years.

He said that he knew he wanted to become a firefighter.

“It’s definitely a great fit,” the 56-year-old said of his second career. It’s the calls to the schools to teach youngsters about fire safety and personal responsibility that touch him dearly.



**The citation given to Mathews on Sept. 27.**



Seeing “the children, their eyes light up; they see us as role models,” Mathews said of his department colleagues. The lessons go beyond fire safety, he explained. It’s about teaching youngsters to “have a positive attitude, and to always do the right thing.” The children are eager to learn from him. “They’re just like sponges.”

**Duxbury firefighters Capt. Rob Reardon, left, and Harry Mathews on an earlier fire call.**

Courtesy photo